

INCOMING TELEGRAM

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ACTION DEPARTMENT 1296, INFORMATION BONN, BERLIN, MOSCOW, LONDON
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IN DE GAULLE REMARKS ON BERLIN-GERMAN PROBLEMS AT PRESS CONFERENCE AVERSION TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH USSR UNDER CRISIS CONDITIONS IS AGAIN MARKED, AS IN ALL RECENT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STATEMENTS FRENCH OFFICIALS. WITH USUAL CONSISTENCY, DE GAULLE REPEATED WHAT HE TOLD KHRUSHCHEV ON LATTER'S VISIT FRANCE AND HAS RESTATED OFTEN SINCE, THAT DETENTE MUST PRECEDE NEGOTIATIONS, FOR NEGOTIATIONS UNDER SOVIET PRESSURE WILL ONLY LEAD TO WORSE CONDITIONS FOR WESTERN WORLD. DE GAULLE SUPPORTED POSITION BY ARGUING THAT CONCESSIONS WILL GENERATE NEW DEMANDS; BY IMPLYING THAT CONCESSIONS POWERLESS TO INFLUENCE PROSPECT OF WAR; AND BY EXPRESSING BELIEF THAT SOVIETS ONLY BLUFFING, I.E., THEY WILL NOT GO TO EXTREMITY OF WAR FOR DERISORY PURPOSE SINCE THEY APPRECIATE DESTRUCTION THEY WILL SUFFER.

DE GAULLE'S EMPHASIS ON GRAVITY BERLIN SITUATION MAY HAVE SOBERING EFFECT FRENCH POPULATION, WHICH MANY SIGNS INDICATE HAS NOT YET FACED UP TO POTENTIALITIES BERLIN SITUATION, PARTLY BECAUSE ABSORPTION INTERNAL AND NORTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS WHERE FRENCH STRUGGLE ALONE OR WHERE OPPONENTS ARE ARAB NATIONALISTS RATHER THAN BLOC COMMUNISTS.

IT IS TRUE THAT DE GAULLE PRESENTED BERLIN AFFAIR LARGELY

IN TERMS

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E.O. 11652, SEC. 3(E), 5(D), 5(E) AND 11

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-2- 1296, SEPTEMBER 6, 5 PM, FROM PARIS

IN TERMS STRUGGLE BETWEEN SOVIET UNION AND THREE WESTERN POWERS WITH ONLY BRIEF REFERENCE TO ORIGIN, AND SUBSTANCE OF ISSUES AT STAKE VALUES WHOSE DEFENSE MAY ULTIMATELY REQUIRE ACCEPTANCE RISK OF NUCLEAR WAR WERE STRESSED RATHER IN NEGATIVE SENSE OF FREEDOM THAT WAS LACKING IN SOVIET EMPIRE AND STRESSES AND STRAINS THAT BESET SOVIET BLOC AS RESULT. BERLIN ISSUES, WERE DISCUSSED IN TERMS OF GLOBAL STRATEGY AND THE NEED FOR DEFENDING ALLIED RIGHTS AND WESTERN EUROPEAN INFLUENCE. NOR WAS THERE ANY MENTION OF SPECIFIC MEASURES CONTEMPLATED BY GOF TO BACKUP DETERMINATION EXPRESSED BY DE GAULLE.

HOWEVER, NET IMPRESSION CREATED BY STATEMENT ON BERLIN WAS ONE OF AWARENESS OF GRAVITY CRISIS AND SOLIDARITY ON FUNDAMENTALS OF SITUATION. MOREOVER, DE GAULLE WHILE EXPRESSING WILLINGNESS NEGOTIATE IN MORE SUITABLE CONTEXT IF SOVIETS WOULD CREATE IT, HAD COURAGE TO STATE CLEARLY THAT IN CASE OF WAR SOVIETS ALSO HIGHLY VULNERABLE DESPITE ALL BIG TALK. WHILE IDEA SOVIET LEADING FROM WEAKNESS MAY CREATE DANGER OF COMPLACENCY WITH REGARD TO SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO BACKDOWN, DE GAULLE SEEMS ON BALANCE TO HAVE SOUNDED NOTE OF COURAGE AND WESTERN SOLIDARITY AT TIME WHEN BOTH BADLY NEEDED.

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